

MINUTES
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission Meeting
FWP Headquarters – 1420 East 6th Avenue
Helena, MT
DECEMBER 11, 2008

Commission Members Present: Shane Colton, Vice-Chairman; Dan Vermillion; Willie Doll; Vic Workman.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Staff Present: Director Joe Maurier and FWP Staff.

Guests: See December 11, 2008 Commission file folder for those who signed in.

Work Session: A work session was held immediately following the meeting to discuss the Upper Missouri River Reservoir Management Plan

Topics of Discussion:

1. **Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2008**
3. **Approval of Commission Expenses through November, 2008**
4. **2009 Commission Meeting Schedule – Final**
5. **Parks Biennial Fee Rule – Final**
6. **Smith River Special Use Area Rule – Final**
7. **Commercial Use Permit Fee Rule – Final**
8. **Foy's Lake Land Exchange (part of Lone Pine State Park) – Endorsement**
9. **MT Natural History Center FAS on the Bitterroot River (David's Place FAS) – Final**
10. **Tampico Riffles FAS – Endorsement**
11. **Clearwater Lands Project in Missoula County (Marshall Block)– Endorsement**
12. **Mount Haggin WMA Land Exchange (Duhamme Property) – Endorsement**
13. **Royal Teton Ranch Grazing Lease Acquisition – Final**
14. **Cree Crossing WMA Fee Title Acquisition – Final**
15. **2009 Elk Season Adjustments in HD360 and HD362 – Tentative**
16. **Helena Urban Deer Update & Request for Extension of Pilot Project – Tentative**
17. **Open Microphone – Public Opportunity to Address Additional FWP Issues**

1. **Opening - Pledge of Allegiance.** Vice-Chairman Colton called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Approval of November 10, 2008 Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Action: Workman moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the November 10, 2008 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. **Approval of the November, 2008 Commission Expense Report.**

Action: Workman moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the November expense report as presented. Motion carried.

4. 2009 Commission Meeting Schedule – Final. Vermillion requested that the June meeting be rescheduled for June 18 rather than the proposed date of June 11.

Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve the proposed 2009 Commission Meeting Schedule with the amendment of changing the June 11 meeting date to June 18.

Vic stated that traveling to other areas to hold Commission meetings is very expensive and unnecessary. Colton stated that meeting locations will be discussed at a later date, however a commitment has been made to hold a meeting in Hamilton in 2009.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

5. Parks Biennial Fee Rule – Final. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, stated that there are no changes to the proposed tentatives. The public comment period generated one comment from Department of Commerce inquiring whether or not vehicle registrations would be checked at state parks to determine if the registration fee had been paid.

Proposed changes:

- ✓Increase the non-resident entrance fee from \$2 to \$3 per person
- ✓Increase the fee for the use of electricity at campsites from \$3 to \$5
- ✓Change the non-resident entrance fee from per-person fee to a per-vehicle fee at several parks
- ✓Increase the rental fee for cabins and yurts from \$40 to \$45 per night
- ✓Standardize the camping fee at \$15 at all state park locations
- ✓Add three FASs in Region 5 to the Fishing Access Site Camping list
- ✓Standardize the rates for meeting rooms statewide
- ✓Update the group use shelter list
- ✓Standardize the competitive event and organized group fees for the Blackfoot River/Madison River at \$3 per person
- ✓Make other miscellaneous wording changes and clarifications throughout the Rule

Van Genderen said that to become an authorized outfitter in Alberton Gorge, existing outfitters have to be bought out. Charlie Sperry, FWP Recreation Specialist, stated that the fishing outfitting community is troubled about the fact that they cannot operate in Idaho, but Idaho outfitters can operate in Montana. Sperry said legislation is to be introduced during the 2009 session to address reciprocity with Idaho, however that issue falls under the Board of Outfitters and not under FWP.

Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to adopt the final Parks Biennial Fee Rule. Motion carried.

6. Smith River Special Use Area Rule – Final. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, said there are no recommended changes to the proposed tentative rule. The tentative recommended only one change to the rule, and that pertained to updating the authorized outfitter list. The comment period generated one comment voicing concern over inequity of permit costs. The Smith River Management Plan is currently being updated. Not all river rules are consistent, so the Department will be working on that as well.

Action: Vermillion moved and Workman seconded the motion to approve the proposal to modify the Smith River Special Use Area Rule as proposed. Motion carried.

7. Commercial Use Permit Fee Rule – Final. The Commercial Use Permit Fee Rule has now been in place for two years. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, stated that the approved tentative rule recommended making no changes to the rule. FWP received fifteen comments, mostly from the whitewater floating industry, concerning the \$100 fishing access site permit fee. Because the fee rule is attached to an administrative rule, it is the recommendation to move the rule forward as proposed.

Colton stated that development of the fee rule involved extensive public comment. It may be necessary to make an adjustment for whitewater guides, however it would be difficult to amend the administrative rule and make fiscal adjustments before the season starts. He stated that the Department does want to work with whitewater outfitters.

Action: Workman moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to adopt the Commercial Use Permit Fee Rule as proposed and to instruct the Department to evaluate the commercial use administrative rules and report its findings and recommendations to the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Wayne Fairchild, Lewis & Clark Trail Adventures, said it is difficult to buy the \$100 license for a guide he hires for only one or two days. He asked the Commission if they could change the rule so whitewater outfitters can hire guides for a lesser amount, such as \$20.

Porter Hammitt, Missoula Outdoor Learning Adventures, stated that his organization is basically for children's recreation opportunities. His guides only work a few trips during the summer, and the \$100 fee causes a financial burden on MOLA. He asked for a financial break for this coming summer. He suggested that the permit stay with the boat.

Ken Sinay, Yellowstone Safari Company, suggested permitting the business with an additional fee per employee. It encourages employment rather than contractors. His business has one boat but he has a number of guides.

Justin Walsh, Bearpaw Expeditions, supports a revision of the current plan to maintain the \$100 annual FAS permit and establish a three-day permit. It is a way to hire more temporary employees.

Colton assured everyone that this situation will be reviewed and more public comment will be taken so as to include all interested parties.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

8. Foy's Lake Land Exchange (part of Lone Pine State Park) – Endorsement. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, stated that Foy's Lake is located approximately three miles southwest of Kalispell. The Department owns 2.09 acres in two separate parcels on the north side of the lake that are separated by two small half-acre privately owned tracts of land that the public treats as public land. No-trespassing signage has had no effect. The private landowners are interested in a land trade with FWP, involving FWP property on the west end of Foy's Lake, to eliminate the private in-holdings and reduce the trespass issues. The land exchange would result in continuous FWP land ownership in the area the public is utilizing thereby eliminating the private property trespass situation.

Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve negotiations with the adjacent private landowners toward a possible land trade.

Workman asked if this trade would improve public access. Van Genderen replied that it would improve access, and it would comply with the good neighbor statute as well. He added that the public is probably not aware that they are currently trespassing.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

9. MT Natural History Center FAS on the Bitterroot River (David's Place FAS) – Final. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, stated that this 77.6-acre property is currently owned by the Montana Natural History Center in Missoula. This floodplain property consists of cottonwoods and riparian vegetation, and is well suited for public access. It connects several FWP properties, known as the Bitterroot Parcels, which are small, scattered, undeveloped parcels of land located in this reach of the river that can only be accessed from the river. Access to the property is off of Highway 93 between Missoula and Lolo, and requires crossing a Montana Rail Link spur line. FWP has met with Montana Rail Link and Montana Department of Transportation to discuss crossing requirements. Additional discussions will be necessary to finalize specific railroad crossing requirements. An appraisal of similar floodplain properties revealed that the asking price of \$96,000 is below market value. The Environmental Assessment generated sixteen comments – fifteen were in favor and one expressed concern about trespass and vandalism.

Action: Vermillion moved and Workman seconded the motion to approve the purchase of the Montana Natural History Center property for \$96,000. Motion carried.

10. Tampico Riffles FAS – Endorsement. Chas Van Genderen, Acting FWP Parks Administrator, explained that the site for the proposed 30-acre Tampico Riffles Fishing Access Site is located twelve miles northwest of Glasgow along the Milk River. Currently, there are no access sites to the Milk River near Glasgow. The landowner has not prevented anglers from using his land to access the Milk River, however he has endured littering and sanitation issues. The proposed FAS would provide a graveled access roadway, a parking area, a latrine, a legal and safe trail to lead anglers to the river's bank, and signage. A price has not been determined at this point as negotiations have not begun. The Department is requesting Commission approval to begin negotiations.

Action: Vermillion moved and Colton seconded the motion to authorize the Department to pursue negotiations for the acquisition of the Tampico Riffles Fishing Access Site. Motion carried. Three in favor – one opposed (Workman opposed).

11. Clearwater Lands Project in Missoula County (Marshall Block)– Endorsement. Chris Hunter, FWP Fisheries Division Administrator, explained that the the Montana Legacy Project is a collaboration of The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land to protect 312,748 acres of forestland habitat owned by Plum Creek. The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land signed a purchase agreement for this land at a cost of \$510 million. They are acting as interim landowners with the intention of transferring all the land, either through easement or fee title, to public agencies or to private landowners with stipulated conservation restrictions. FWP identified a 24,311-acre parcel that encompasses three stream drainages in the Clearwater as a top priority for acquisition and protection. All three streams are important to bull trout recovery, native westslope cutthroat trout, and mountain whitefish. FWP is seeking to secure this entire parcel through either fee title purchase or perpetual conservation easements. FWP requested \$640,640 from the State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program and \$6 million from the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition program.

Action: Vermillion moved and Workman seconded the motion that FWP proceed with efforts to secure the Clearwater Lands Project.

Vice-Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

12. Mount Haggin WMA Land Exchange (Duhamme Property) – Endorsement. Ken McDonald, FWP Wildlife Division Administrator, explained that FWP proposes to exchange a 40-acre parcel of fee-title land for an adjacent 40-acre parcel that is owned by Mr. Walter Erickson. This exchange would eliminate a half mile of fencing, thereby reducing construction and maintenance costs, minimizing the amount of fencing on the big game winter range, and allowing a more efficient layout of pastures. Both parcels are similar in habitat type, and they basically have the same amount of timber value. The management plan for this acquisition dovetails into the management plan of the Mount Haggin and Fleecer Wildlife Management Areas.

Action: Workman moved and Doll seconded the motion to proceed with the 40-acre land exchange between FWP and Walter J. Erickson on property located on T3N R 9W Section 19, west of Butte in Silver Bow County.

Vice-Chair Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

13. Royal Teton Ranch Grazing Lease Acquisition – Final. Pat Flowers, FWP Region 3 Supervisor, explained that in 2005, the Governor asked FWP to negotiate with the Church Universal and Triumphant to acquire grazing rights on the Royal Teton Ranch for bison. A tentative agreement has been reached for a 30-year grazing rights acquisition to be funded by the National Park Service (\$1.5 million), non-government groups (\$1 million) and Fish, Wildlife and Parks (\$300,000).

When the Interagency Bison Management Plan was adopted in 2000, one stipulation with the RTR was to purchase grazing rights to remove cattle from that property to allow bison to migrate north of Yellowstone National Park and west of the Yellowstone River without the risk of brucellosis transmission. Those bison will then be available to Montana hunters on Forest Service property north of the RTR. The negotiations in 2000 were halted when the land appraised at too high of a value.

The Environmental Assessment was prepared and presented for public comment. A number of comments were received. Of particular concern was the fence. As negotiations progressed, the Ranch indicated they wanted protection for their property, so it was determined that an electric fence would be the solution. FWP developed a four-strand design to channel the bison to where they need to be. After the bison have traveled through the RTR property and have relocated themselves on forest service land, FWP will drop the fence so other wildlife can move through. Another concern is the cost of the acquisition. It comes down to comparing cost to benefit. This is a 30-year agreement, and is the only opportunity for bison to move north along the Yellowstone River.

Vermillion said he had been informed by the biologist in Livingston that the fence is a good solution, to which Flowers agreed that it is. Doll asked whose responsibility it is to take the fence down and put it back up, and how much it would cost to maintain the fence. Flowers replied that details have not been finalized yet, but the responsibility and costs will be shared by all five agencies involved. It is estimated that it will cost approximately \$5,000 per year to maintain the fence. The RTR will not be involved in fence maintenance.

Action: Colton moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to authorize FWP to enter into an agreement to purchase the grazing rights from the Royal Teton Ranch for a 30-year period, and to commit \$300,000 of FWP funds towards that purchase.

Vice-Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Shannon Taylor, Headwaters Sportmen's Association, said that their group has not taken a formal position, but they have discussed the use of sportsmen dollars for real estate deals. The money should purchase public access for hunting, and outfitting should not be allowed.

Glenn Hockett, Gallatin Wildlife Association, and Buffalo Allies, said the Commission needs to understand the level of opposition to this plan. There is a need to slow down. GWA wants bison managed as wildlife and not as livestock. The Commission needs to tour the land, and needs to inform the public of exactly what FWP is getting. Open up more public dialogue. "If this is the best that we can do, don't do it. There are options". He is concerned about the fences that will restrict other species from crossing through them.

Jim Bailey, Gallatin Wildlife Association, asked if there are bison use areas in this agreement. He has heard conflicting answers. The cost of this proposal is beyond justification. If other agencies fail or back out, who is responsible to make payments? It is a risky and expensive purchase.

Bonnie Lynn, Bozeman, said she owns the first land where the fence will go. This proposal is for only twenty-five bison. The rest of them will go on her land. The fence will kill other wildlife – she saw a baby deer hung up in a fence near her place. The river is their source for water, and the barrier fence will create problems and death of other animals. Stop thinking about money and start thinking about protecting wildlife.

Stephany Seay, Buffalo Field Campaign, said her organization totally opposes this land lease. It is a corridor to nowhere. The ranch received money before and failed to come through on their end of the bargain. This is not protecting bison. What happens after the thirty years are over? The slaughter will still happen. This does not protect the brucellosis free status, and it was not bison that removed the brucellosis-free status in the first place. The public is opposed to this, and it is public money. Coexistence with bison can be done. The BFC can help instruct CUT members on the coexistence with bison. This lease is a bad idea.

Bill O'Connell, Gallatin Wildlife Association, suggested the Commission and Director tour the area as he feels there is a lack of understanding. Public comment is overwhelmingly in opposition – it is a preposterous proposal. There is room for improvement. This is not a step forward for bison.

Ben Lamb, Montana Wildlife Federation, said he disagrees with the Gallatin Wildlife Association. This is a small step forward and is within the framework of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. Continue to build off of this proposal. He encouraged the Commission to go forward with this proposal.

Kate Gordon, Royal Teton Ranch President, said that 5,300 acres of RTR land was sold for \$11.2 million in 1999. An additional 1,500 acres were put into a conservation easement. There is a misconception that the Church Universal and Triumphant was given 13 million dollars. There has never been an agreement with the RTR. Most of the fencing on the property line is already up, but a different type of fencing will be erected. There has been very little problem with the fence that is already there. They are bound by the agreement signed in 1999 stating that there will be 25 bison the first year, with more discussions to follow to permit additional bison. The RTR is willing discuss the matter annually. As a private property owner, they are trying to do something to alleviate the conundrum.

Vermillion said this is an emotional issue. Both FWP and those folks who oppose the proposal share the common goal of trying to increase habitat for bison. Some folks do not want to see bison leave the Park at all. This agreement is not perfect, but is a step forward. FWP is working toward the same goal as the folks who are frustrated with this proposal.

Workman said this is not about bison or brucellosis, but it is about grazing. The livestock industry does not want bison on the open range. He said brucellosis is transmitted through elk, and yet the Department continues to spend money on bison, which is an atrocity. Voting should be based on reality and not on politics.

Colton said this is not a perfect solution, but it is an enormous step forward in the right direction.

Doll asked if this decision could be tabled until a tour of the RTR is conducted. He said he does not want to restart the process, but merely gain information. Colton replied no, as it has come too far. Workman suggested Doll make a motion to table it if he was so inclined.

Flowers stated that there is a series of steps in the adaptive management plan. This is step 2. The purpose under the IBMP is to reduce risk of transmission of brucellosis to cattle by removing the cattle from this narrow corridor, as well as to provide bison the opportunity to move out of the Park into new habitat. FWP committed to this step when it signed the agreement with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Interior. The Governor also signed off on this step.

Doll asked if there is an option to extend the agreement after thirty years. Flowers replied that RTR and FWP discussed a permanent agreement, but because after thirty years the whole world will be changed, FWP is willing to accept a 30-year agreement. There is also a conservation easement already in place on the Royal Teton Ranch.

Bonnie Lynn, Bozeman, asked if anyone can hunt the bison or if it is purely tribal. She said there is a first right of refusal. Flowers said RTR could possibly sell their ranch, but they have said they have no intention of doing that. The Nez Perce can hunt on unclaimed land so they could hunt along with Montana licensed hunters.

Glenn Hockett, Gallatin Wildlife Association, suggested the Commission take a tour of the ranch. The process should be farther along than it is anyway, so “what’s the hurry”?

Flowers stated that there is a timeline for steps in the process, and because it is behind schedule, it is important to act now.

Vermillion stated that this Interagency Bison Plan agreement was signed by either Governor Martz or Governor Racicot, and must be adhered to. Without this agreement, the bison who come out of the Park have no place to go.

Action on Motion: Motion failed. Two in favor – two opposed. (Workman and Doll opposed).

Action: Doll moved and Vermillion seconded the motion that action be tabled pending a tour of the Royal Teton Ranch, after which time the proposal would be reconsidered. Vermillion amended the motion to stipulate that the tour be conducted within the next ten days.

Workman stated, when attempts were made to contact Chairman Doherty, that it is not appropriate to solicit another proponent to pass a motion that has already failed.

Action on Motion: Motion carried. Three in favor – one opposed. (Workman opposed).

Becky Jakes Dockter, FWP Legal Counsel, stated that this motion has to be contingent upon the landowners permission to tour the ranch.

14. Cree Crossing WMA Fee Title Acquisition – Final. Ken McDonald, FWP Wildlife Division Administrator, explained that the 400-acre Cree Crossing property is located in Phillips County northeast of Malta along the Milk River. Diverse habitats support white-tailed deer, mule deer, pheasants, sharp-tailed grouse, raptors, waterfowl, eight Montana Species of Concern, and many non-game species.

FWP proposes to purchase the property fee title for \$719,500 (\$1,800/acre), using Habitat Montana and Statewide Wildlife Grant money. The property will be managed as part of the existing Milk River Wildlife Management Area. FWP is currently negotiating with the Bureau of Reclamation to manage 2,492 acres of BOR lands located between the WMA and this property. Thirty-two written comments were received with only one in opposition. The Phillips County Commissioners were concerned about loss of property taxes and inflated agricultural land prices, however they are aware that the land could be sold for recreational use which would also drive agricultural land prices up. FWP explained that the Department does pay property taxes on property it acquires, and noted that a local landowner would likely be farming some of the property under FWP ownership.

Action: Doll moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Department's purchase of the Cree Crossing Ranch. Motion carried.

15. 2009 Elk Season Adjustments in HD360 and HD362 – Tentative. Quentin Kujala, FWP Wildlife Division Management Bureau Chief, stated that the adoption of the 2009 season at the February 2008 FWP Commission meeting created issues with landowners regarding elk Hunting Districts 360 and 362. Subsequently, the Madison Valley Elk Issues Working Group was formed to address issues related to elk management.

Following is the narrative of the adopted 2009 season, and a narrative of the proposed tentative replacement season for 2009.

Current 2009 elk regulation narrative description: The General Season is BTB/Antlerless with youth opportunity valid for either sex. There is an Airport Weapons Restriction Area. Included is a Madison Special Management Area (MSMA) that covers portions of Hunting Districts 360 & 362. This MSMA is antlerless only and the quota is 200 antlerless permits to be used in combination with a general license and/or an A9/B12 license. All of these permit holders are required to attend a Hunting Orientation Seminar in Ennis. In addition there are 400 A9/B12 licenses issued through the drawing valid for the remainder of the two hunting districts.

Proposed 2009 elk regulation narrative description: The General Season would be the same, BTB/Antlerless, with youth opportunity valid for either sex. Included is an Airport Weapons Restriction Area. There is no MSMA (eliminating the permits for that area). Unlimited, over-the-counter A9/B12 licenses are proposed (eliminating the 400 via the drawing A9/B12 licenses). Hunters with A9/B12 licenses valid in these two districts would be required to take an on-line course specific to safe and ethical hunting.

Action: Vermillion moved and Workman seconded the motion to adopt the tentative regulations for Hunting Districts 360 & 362 as recommended by the Department.

Vice-Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Shannon Taylor, Bozeman, said a great solution was reached. It is a model.

Glenn Hockett, Gallatin Wildlife Association, supports these recommendations. He expressed thanks to the landowners, sportsmen, and Ginny Tribe.

Lane Adamson, Ennis, commends all involved, and supports the proposal.

John Scully, Ennis, said he is optimistic that it will work. He is anxious to see what happens. He hired a hunt coordinator, with a target of 30 hunters. So far they are overbooked until the end of the extended season. There is damage to fencing etc, so if FWP asks for additional funding for these purposes, he can provide examples that will help explain, and they can contact the principals. The relationship between landowners and FWP has improved.

Stephany Seay, Buffalo Field Campaign, said she is new to hunting, but feels this is another management tactic to benefit the cattle industry. She hears that there are too many elk, but then on the other hand hears that wolves are killing them all – many inconsistencies.

Jayre Leech, Cameron, said the focus is on the hunting landscape. There is a need for open land on which to hunt. The beef producers provide meat nationwide. It is important to pass this tentative.

Bill Orsello, Montana Wildlife Federation, said this is a good move forward. There is still concern about inequitable allocation. This model increases benefits to outfitters. Public lands in back of Madison ranches are difficult to access, so moving the elk there is not beneficial. That must be addressed and resolved for the public.

Jeff Kline said he appreciates that the tradition of outfitting is listed in the ground rules. As a whole, he is committed to working with neighbors in the Madison. It may not be perfect but is a good place to start.

Kurt Alt, FWP Region 3 Wildlife Manager, said somewhere along the line cooperation fractured, and he is happy to see that it is repaired. This provides options and potentials on managing elk and elk distribution.

Bill O'Connell, Gallatin Wildlife Assn, supports the proposal, and is glad it is an ongoing process.

Ginny Tribe said it was a pleasure to work with this group. It was a large enough group that all interests were covered. The Charter was helpful and was solidified in the beginning. The value of this process lies in the future.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

16. Helena Urban Deer Update & Request for Extension of Pilot Project – Tentative. The 2003 Legislature authorized cities to create plans to control wildlife, subject to FWP Commission approval. The City of Helena developed an Urban Deer Management Plan and presented it to FWP. After discussion with the City of Helena, the FWP Commission authorized the City to remove up to 50 deer as a pilot project. Over the course of the fall, 50 deer, primarily adult females, were culled from the urban herd. Public opinion for the proposal was split 50/50, but the city council approved the plan.

Ken McDonald, FWP Wildlife Division Administrator, stated that the City of Helena is now seeking a continuation and expansion of the project, which would now include three new areas of the city with removal of up to 50 deer in each area (150 total deer) across all sex and age classes. The project would take place this winter. FWP expects that the entire 150 deer will be removed. FWP staff would provide technical assistance, but would not expend any operating funds on deer removal.

Tim Burton, Helena City Manager, said the pilot project has been completed, and he is now reporting back. Culling was managed by the police department. The City is proposing that FWP weigh in on all subdivision proposals. He narrated a power point of the project. He requested Commission approval to allow the killing of 150 more deer this winter.

Troy McGee, Chief of Police, said in order to remove the deer, they used baited traps. He said 40 additional deer were killed during this time period due to vehicle accidents, fences etc.

Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to adopt this tentative recommendation to remove 150 deer of all age and sex classes in three areas of the City, and to direct FWP to assist the City of Helena with further refinement and implementation of the Helena Deer Management Plan as proposed by FWP.

Berma Saxton, Helena resident, said the public was told that fawns were not to be culled. Now the city is asking permission to kill the yearlings as it would be more efficient use of time to kill the young ones.

Workman asked if the City of Helena has offered any compensation to FWP for expenses. McDonald replied that expenses have been minimal, mainly only the use of FWP trucks to transport the animals. Workman said the City should use their own trucks.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

17. Open Microphone – Public Opportunity to Address Additional FWP Issues.

Rod Bullis said an evaluation needs to be done during antlerless season.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said the Elk Archery Working Group was charged with developing workable options within the archery regulations. They reached consensus on four points, and developed ideas for additional proposals as well. The public has been concerned with the efforts of the Group, and because several members of the Group submitted private comments, the Commission did not pursue the items on which consensus had been achieved. Now the public is asking whether the Group ever got anything accomplished. She asked that the Commission either attach a summary of the consensus items to the tentatives package as an informational item, or post those consensus items, and the additional items they proposed, on the FWP website. She said the members worked hard and she wants to see their efforts acknowledged.

Vermillion said the Group needs reassessed if it is to continue.

Workman said that because his term has ended, this is his last Commission meeting. He said it has been an honor to represent Region 1, and he has enjoyed working with everyone. The frustrating part is the politics involved. Colton said he admired Workman for his standing up for what he believes in. Vermillion said Workman should be proud of his efforts.

Action: Workman moved and Colton seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 a.m.

Shane Colton, Vice-Chairman

Joseph M. Maurier, Acting Director